

**City of Sterling Heights**  
**ETHNIC COMMUNITY COMMITTEE**

Official minutes of the Thursday, November 6, 2014 regular meeting.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mohammed Alomari  
Omie Brooks  
Ike Cabase  
Ann Jerzowski  
Susan Kattula  
Steve Naumovski  
Andrew Pulford  
Iqbal Singh

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Sharron Allen  
Doug Najor

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

Citizen Services Specialist Sue Giallombardo  
Community Relations Director Steve Guitar

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Agenda: MOTION by Kattula, SECONDED by Naumovski.  
Approved 8-0

4. Approval of Minutes: MOTION by Naumovski, SECONDED by Kattula.  
Approved 8-0

5. Communication from Citizens:

- Jerzowski praised Steve Guitar for the work he has done for the Ethnic Community Committee. Jerzowski added that Guitar has a very welcoming manner and she appreciates that.
- Naumovski thanked Guitar for his commitment; as did Cabase.
- Guitar thanked the entire committee. He added that he has had a terrific 29 years with the city, and had worked with the Ethnic Community Committee since it's onset in 1990. Guitar stated that he appreciates the committee and added that the talents and skills of each member reflect on the city.
- Giallombardo stated that the Breakfast of Nations is on November 19th. Members are all invited to attend; the event is at 7:30 a.m. at the MISD building on Garfield

Road. Cost of each ticket is \$25.00. Please contact Giallombardo if you would like to attend.

- Giallombardo said that the MLK Holiday Celebration is going to be held on January 19th. She added that as in the past, the Ethnic Community Committee will purchase one table for ten, and a full page ad for \$400.00. The cost is taken out of the committee's escrow account. The ad in the program is an advertisement for the Cultural Exchange, to be held on Friday, March 13th. Please contact Giallombardo if you would like to attend the event.

#### 6. Communications from the Sterling Heights Police Dept.-Sgt. Linda Deprez:

- Deprez said that at the last meeting, the discussion of interpreters was brought up. Deprez stated that when a suspect is in court or in custody, there is an interpreter available. The problem is when the officers are at a scene. They can usually find an interpreter during the day, but that's not the case in the evening. The department is trying to improve this situation. They would like to hire a more diverse population of officers, but there are not a lot of diverse candidates on the list. They are working on coming up with tools to encourage members of the diverse population to enter law enforcement.
- Cabase stated that perhaps committee members could make themselves available to assist with interpreting.
- Naumovski said that it's difficult to interpret between a child and a parent, especially when the situation is serious.
- Deprez thanked everyone for their input. She said the department will be reaching out to the committee members and organizations that they are affiliated with.
- Cabase stated that Steve Gold, with One Macomb, may have accurate and up-to-date census figures.
- Guitar added that he recently met with Police Chief Reese, Fire Chief Martin and several Chaldean American Ambassadors that are available for assistance and consulting. They discussed the diversity of the department and the need to encourage younger people to become more interested. The meetings will continue throughout the year.

#### 7. Agenda

##### **A. 2014 Diversity Distinction Awards**

- Cabase stated that he had sent out e-mails to several members of the community, asking for nominations.
- Giallombardo stated that 12 nominations were received. They are as follows:
  - o Maatouk Bakery
  - o WINGS – Women in God's Service
  - o SET Logistics
  - o Angie Lommen
  - o Lt. James Selewski
  - o The Food Pantry at St. Ephrem

- o Stephen Ministry, St. Lawrence Church
- o Melanie Grund
- o Pastor Alvin Thomas
- o Michelle Dubiel
- o Steve Guitar
- o Mayor Richard Notte
- Each nominee was discussed in detail, as to their qualifications and accomplishments that would make them deserving of a diversity distinction award.
- Jerzowski made a motion to award three of the nominees, Guitar, Selewski and Notte, with a “champion of diversity” certificate. Motion was seconded by Kattula. Motion Approved: 5-3.
- Naumovski asked to add the word ‘honorary’ to the certificate.
- Deprez stated that she believes that Notte has done so much more than any of the nominees, above and beyond to champion diversity, and suggested that he be honored in another way.
- Pulford made a motion to take Notte off of the list of certificate recipients so that he can be honored at a later date. Motion was seconded by Singh. Motion Approved: 8-0.
- Committee members voted on the remaining nine nominees.
- Naumovski made a motion to award seven nominees with a diversity distinction award: WINGS, SET Logistics, The Food Pantry, Stephen Ministry, Melanie Grund, Pastor Alvin Thomas and Michelle Dubiel. Motion was seconded by Kattula. Motion Approved: 8-0.
- Giallombardo stated that she will order the award trophies and will ask Comcast to sponsor the cost, as they did in 2013.
- Giallombardo stated that the next regular meeting will be held prior to the award presentation on December 2nd, at 6:00 p.m. A reception will follow the regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the lobby outside of council chambers.
- Members are welcome to volunteer to bring an appetizer. Please let Giallombardo know if you can bring something. Giallombardo will also purchase some items once she hears from everyone.

## **B. “Getting to Know Your Neighbor” – Panel**

- Due to time constraints, this item was tabled and will be re-addressed at the December meeting.

8. Receipt of Correspondence: None

9. New Business:

- Kattula stated that she was successful in her campaign for a six-year term on the Warren Consolidated School Board. This is Kattula’s third term. Members congratulated Kattula.

10. Old Business:

- Jerzowski asked if the committee would be adopting a family as it did last year. It was decided that a majority of the members would like to participate. Giallombardo offered to secure a deserving family and do the shopping, once participation was confirmed from enough committee members. Please make arrangements with Giallombardo if you would like to participate. The amount of money that you donate is at your own discretion.

11. Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.